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SIPDIS

FOR DRL/PHD: KARA CUMBERLAND AND NEA/ARN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM E AID KDEM JO

SUBJECT: EMBASSY AMMAN PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY FUND

REF: A. A) AMMAN 3504

1B. B) STATE 65803

1C. C) FELLOWS-LEVISON MAY 3 AND FEB 26 E-MAILS

1D. D) AMMAN 1232

1E. E) AMMAN 842

1. Embassy Amman is pleased to submit a project proposal for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's (DRL's) consideration. Per the invitation in ref tel B, post seeks funding for this proposal from DRL's FY2004 Human Rights and Democracy Fund (HRDF). This proposal would build on post's success with FY2003 HRDF funding and support our human rights strategy (ref E) by providing groundbreaking human rights training and support to Government of Jordan (GOJ) employees.

2. In February and April 2004, post arranged for a human rights activist on sabbatical from Amnesty International (AI) and two American academics with extensive IO experience to present training, lectures, and some one-on-one counseling to more than forty GOJ employees and others on human rights topics. Held in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the new National Center for Human Rights (NCHR), participants included over a dozen MFA personnel, staff of the NCHR, and smaller numbers from the Jordanian Armed Forces, police, intelligence, and the Ministries of Interior, Education, and Justice (refs C and D). When proposed, this was a unique round of training in Jordan's history, though the NCHR is now carrying out similar training efforts for GOJ personnel. The sessions provided the participants essential background on international standards and practices. While other results of these efforts remain largely unmeasured, the networking opportunities alone made the training worthwhile for many participants. For example, the April training session was held at the NCHR, which most of the GOJ employees had never visited.

3. Unfortunately, given the NCHR's short track record and its status as quasi-governmental, it is not recognized widely enough and is typically not eligible to qualify for outside funding, which it might if it were an established NGO. Given its limited GOJ-appropriated budget, the NCHR has little capacity for bringing foreign experts to Jordan (ref A). The staff, while interested and engaged, are largely young and inexperienced, with the AI activist who worked with the NCHR in April pointing out that it has yet to discuss staff development or strategic planning. The NCHR's cooperation with NGOs is also in a nascent stage, though cooperation with international NGOs was facilitated by the activist's visit. GOJ officials in other human rights-related assignments are mostly new to the human rights field, and virtually all are new in their positions, which have been created only in the last few years.

4. Post proposes three sessions of training to be funded by the HRDF and in cooperation with the NCHR. Post would identify an outside expert with substantive experience to conduct each session, to be held on mutually agreeable dates at periodic intervals over the coming fiscal year. Based on their positive contributions in the past, we plan to work with the International Human Rights Law Institute at DePaul University and the AI activist, as well as other persons they might recommend. Audiences of 15-20 persons per session would include GOJ employees and, in at least one of the sessions, NGOs. For this session, the theme would be the role of NGOs and general human rights advocacy, with participation determined by the NCHR. Another session, in cooperation with the MFA, would repeat much of the substance of the February session, which focused on international human rights instruments, standards and bodies. The MFA and the Institute for Diplomacy, which hosted the February training, have expressed a desire to repeat this training and are considering doing so on an annual basis, perhaps as part of the basic training offered to beginning diplomats. The third session would focus on the development of the NCHR itself, with a focus on planning and the work of national human rights organizations. In order to expand the reach of the training sessions to more traditional elements of the GOJ such as the police and Interior Ministry, English-Arabic interpretation would be provided. Each session would last three or four working days and, with the exception of some

NCHR staff who participated in sessions already held, would include GOJ personnel not previously trained.

15. The estimated cost of this proposal is 21,000 USD. Each session would cost approximately 6500 USD, consisting of airfare (3000 USD), per diem (200 USD/day), honorarium (200 USD/day) and interpretation (225 USD/day interpreter and 250 USD/day equipment). Additional material and incidental costs, such as copying and translation of course materials, are estimated at 1500 USD. No rental fees for facilities are included as the NCHR and the Institute for Diplomacy have offered to host these events at no cost, and the Institute may be able to provide interpretation equipment for any sessions held there. Post has personnel with grant signing authority and would administer these funds directly. The action officer would be PolOff Keith Heffern (ETA 6/2004), with PolCouns Chris Henzel (ETA 8/2004) as back-up. Given timely approval and disbursement of the funds, the three sessions can be conducted prior to a change in personnel. Project evaluation would be in the form of written reports by the action officer, based in part on feedback from course participants.

16. Short term goals of this training are awareness raising and capacity building within the GOJ, especially given the lack of relevant experience among most GOJ personnel. This would capitalize on the current government's charge by King Abdullah to promote a human rights culture in Jordan. Over the long term, we hope to create a cadre of concerned and informed GOJ employees who would be stakeholders in such a human rights culture. Given its potentially key role in promoting and defending human rights in Jordan, post also seeks to build the NCHR's training capacity immediately and to raise its standing as an institution over the long term by promoting its independence and efficacy. Given the lack of long-term commitments, the sustainability of this proposal is not a serious concern. Post seeks funding for this proposal through the HRDF because it fills a niche not filled by MEPI and the newly-established AID Democracy and Governance country program, which have focused on other sectors.  
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